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Creating a safe space

Dick Moore has been an advocate for senior members of the LGBTT community for a long time
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'I want to change the rules'

A city couple speaks out on what they say is an Ontario Disability Support Program injustice
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School choir brings season's greetings



FRANKIE BERNAN/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Claire Payne, centre, a student from St. John Bosco Catholic Elementary School sings during the Seaway Mall's Choir Week.

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UPFRONT

■ AWARD: Port Colborne man receives high Ontario honour for work with LGBTT seniors

Dedicated to creating a safe space

FRANKI IKEMAN
Postmedia Network

Dick Moore has been a leader and an advocate for seniors in the LGBTT community for a long time. Passionate about bringing awareness to the needs of ageing lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and transsexual people, Moore has worked with community organizations and cities to ensure programs and services are available to the community. He helped to form the Senior PRIDE network in Toronto, Waterloo and Windsor about 20 years ago.

Recently, the 72-year-old Port Colborne resident was recognized with an Ontario Senior Achievement Award — the highest provincial honour for seniors — for the work that he has done and continues to do.

Moore said the award isn't a big deal to him personally, but is well appreciated if it brings further attention to the ongoing problems surrounding LGBTT seniors.

"The work is very important and I want to continue so if recognition of my work, which is part of other people's work gets then that's good," Moore said.



Dick Moore is pictured in his home.

FRANKI IKEMAN/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Moore spent a majority of his career in Toronto, where he also worked with seniors. He ran a senior centre downtown at St. Christopher House and worked for a number of years at United Way and had seniors agencies as part of his portfolio.

Eventually he shifted gears to looking at issues surrounding gay and lesbian seniors specifically. He ran a drop-in program at the 519, a Toronto organization that

serves the LGBTQ community, for senior gay and lesbian people.

"I interviewed people at the beginning of my term there (the 519 program) and I asked them what it was like to be getting old and what they like and what they didn't like and what they talked about was they would look for opportunities to get together with people like themselves," Moore said.

"They also talked about

having some fear of people coming into their home like a nurse or a personal support worker — they were afraid that they said they would have to kind of 'de-gay' their apartment. They were terrified of going into long-term care like a nursing home, where they felt they would experience oppression and neglect from staff, from other residents and from families of other residents."

Hearing those stories, fears

and concerns led Moore to gathering a group of agencies and senior LGBTT people together to work at educating and enhancing services for the demographic — The Senior Pride Network.

Moore met with long-term care homes to discuss how they deal with older gay and lesbian people and said he was often met with responses like, "Well we don't have any, and we don't know anything about it, and none of our residents have ever been gay or lesbian and none of our staff."

The idea, Moore said, is ridiculous.

"Of course you have gay and lesbian residents. You probably always had them and you probably have staff, too," he said.

Moore was involved in a City of Toronto taskforce which created a first-aid kit to help long-term care facilities prepare to handle the concerns and create a safe space for older LGBTT people.

He said the concerns and requirements of the ageing gay and lesbian population are indeed different than other seniors.

Health concerns like sexually transmitted infections,

misdiagnoses and AIDS are key in terms of health, he said.

"Now that AIDS is as condition you can live with, people are growing older with AIDS, a lot of them age more quickly than other people so they might be looking for long-term care earlier than other people," he said.

Moore said that LGBTT people around his age grew up in a time where it was not socially acceptable to be out of the closet.

"People grew up under this cloud, as it were, of being a criminal, a mental health case and a sinner. That doesn't give you a wonderful sense of yourself. You're not encouraged to do well in school or to try to go forward in your career," he said.

He said he would like to see more training given to people who work in facilities that provide services to seniors.

"It would be nice that agen-cies provided training to their staff and that they did a self-assessment," Moore said. "It would be nice if there were places that welcomed gay and lesbian people and made a point of welcoming."

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■ CRIME: Two Kubota tractors stolen in two years

Thefts and vandalism reported by model flying club

TONY RICCUTO
Postmedia Network

Members of Niagara Region Model Flying Club have had enough of people stealing and disrespecting their property.

"They would like to get some of their items back, including an expensive Kubota riding lawn mower that was recently stolen to replace a similar one that was also stolen."

The club, which has almost a hundred members, is a non-profit organization so it doesn't have a lot of money to replace items that keep getting stolen, said Michael Hind, a member of its executive board.

"Two years ago we had a \$17,000 Kubota lawn tractor stolen from a locked container that we have on the property where we hold some landscaping stuff that we use to keep the field in order," said Hind. "We replaced the stolen Kubota with a similar model tractor, and the new one was stolen last year. That's two tractors in two years and we also had first-aid supplies stolen that we keep on hand in case someone gets hurt."

Members fly from two fields: one is called Waller's Field and is located on Upper's Lane, close to the Niagara Falls/Thorold border, and the other is Brock Field which is on Merrittville Highway in St. Catharines.

The thefts have taken place at the Walker's Field, which is in a rural location and there is only one neighbourhood living in the immediate area.

If anyone purchased an orange coloured used 2013 Kubota GF 1800 4W Diesel tractor with model number 58317 sometime this summer, they should report it to Niagara Regional Police.

That tractor was last seen at 8 p.m. on July 8, and was found missing at 4:30 p.m. on July 9.

"They have also taken a

fire extinguisher that we had mounted on the property for safety reasons," said Hind. "And most recently they stole an aluminum announce's stand that was beautifully fabricated and is worth about \$3,000. It's an elevated stand that gives a very clear view of the field and would be used if you were holding a fly-in event."

"They had had cables

attached to it, so they were cut off and the stand was carted off the property.

"We are a non-profit organization and we try to promote radio controlled model airplane flying to anybody who is interested," said Hind. "We are swinging propellers that are pretty big, they might be 24 inches in diameter, and you could easily lose a finger,"

He noted one member cut his finger recently on a propeller and when he went to use the first-aid kit someone had stolen all the supplies.

"That could be pretty dangerous because you are



Michael Hind of Niagara Region Model Flying Club at the club's field on Upper's Lane, which has been targeted by criminals.

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tony.riccuto@summedia.ca

I'VE BEEN THINKING

GORD ABRAMAH
 Port Colborne Baptist Church

Recently Donald Trump has been playing his "Trump card" of inflammatory, discriminatory, superiority rhetoric, making extreme statements about cutting off all immigration of certain ethnic and religious groups, and protecting the nation from all the "bad people."

He has openly demonized many others from outside of his own country and ethnic background.

Of course if it comes to making money, "The Donald" is willing to do anything with anyone.

If I read history correctly, this is exactly what a madman named Adolf Hitler did in

his own country, stirring up the fears and prejudices and creating a sense of superiority for his own kind, even gaining the ear and partnership of the deceived church leaders.

Thankfully, there were the exceptional few Jesus followers, whose lives and opposing cries were eventually shut down and eliminated. I'm not thankful they were eliminated but that they were discerning enough to see the lies and speak out at a cost to themselves.

Mr. Trump is, of course, playing upon people's baser nature and creating a state of fear and terror to inflate his popularity. What bothers me more than the buffoonery, is the fact that many of those cheering him on and agreeing with him in such vocal ways are supposed to be "Christians."

They appear, from their boisterous support, to be either uninformed as to what Jesus really teaches and calls His followers to be and do, or they are creating a Jesus-god, of their own making" and after their own likeness, in order to maintain their version of what life under God is supposed to be. In either case, they do not represent the faith that is in Christ.

They have no idea that what they are hearing and cheering is far removed from the teaching of Jesus, who in His Sermon on the Mount says, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute

you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you ... let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:6-16).

What we need to do, if we call ourselves Christians in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John's Gospels, and then compare what you hear others saying, and then follow what Jesus says.

Shipwrecks — Mont Blanc

SKIP GILHAM
 For Postmedia Network

A collision on the St. Lawrence River 50 years ago this past September was a mismatch.

The Canadian bulk carrier *Eastern Shell* and the American-owned pulpwood carrier *Mont Blanc* came together in fog east of Trois Rivières, Que., on Sept. 3, 1965, and the wooden ship was doomed.

All of the crew got off safely and were picked up by the lifeboat of the tanker but they watched their vessel sink leaving a large collection of pulpwood logs floating on the river.

Mont Blanc had been built in 1944 using the lower hull of an earlier ship. The latter had a reputation as a coal carrier and apparently a rum runner. It was taken over by the RCMP in 1929 and laid up at Lévis until being rebuilt during the Second World War.

Mont Blanc had been a Great Lakes carrier during the 1950s bringing cargoes of sweet smelling pulpwood from Québec to Great Lakes paper mill docks. But once the St. Lawrence Seaway opened in 1959, the ship spent its remaining days on the St. Lawrence until the accident of a half-century ago.



HANDOUT/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Mont Blanc is shown in this undated photo by Daniel Berube, courtesy of René Beauchamp.

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■ PROPERTY

Realtors praise land transfer tax restrictions

DON FRASER
Postmedia Network

The head of Niagara's real estate association is praising Ontario's decision to not allow any community outside Toronto to have a land transfer tax.

The province has confirmed the 444 municipalities across Ontario will not be given the same power as the City of Toronto to impose that tax.

Municipal Affairs Minister Ted McMeekin said he consulted a wide range of groups following last year's local elections and found there was no call for a municipal land transfer tax.

He said local governments are looking for new revenue tools, but added there will be no extension of a land transfer tax to any municipality beyond Toronto.

"It's great news for the residents of Niagara any time we can prevent a substantial tax on (buying)," said Stephen Oliver, president of the Niagara Association of

Realtors. "So it'll be a good thing for residents who are purchasing."

Oliver said his provincial association had lobbied hard not to extend the Toronto provision.

The Ontario Real Estate Association and several mayors also had warned the province that a land transfer tax would hurt home sales and the economy.

It also used a social media campaign to promote the cause "and it seems to have helped sway the government," Oliver said.

The Progressive Conservatives also celebrated in the legislature after McMeekin's surprise announcement during Question Period.

Deputy party leader Steve Clark had campaigned against giving cities and towns the ability to create a land transfer tax, which he warned would hit home buyers with a bill averaging an extra \$10,000 on closing.

— with files from The Canadian Press

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **ODSP:** Port Colborne couple say disability payment rules are unfair

'I know the rules. I want to change the rules'

FRANKI KEMAN
Postmedia Network

A Port Colborne couple is speaking out on what they say is an injustice in the Ontario Disability Support Program.

At 41 years old, Julie Wood has been living on ODSP for seven years for a variety of health reasons, including depression and bulging discs in her back and neck.

Wood is married to 61-year-old John Savigny, who as of last year began collecting Canada Pension Plan — a \$288 cheque he said helped "keep the wolf away from the door."

Savigny took his CPP at the age of 60 due to the cost of re-licensing himself as a commercial driver, and he

is struggling with arthritis. But when ODSP found out about Savigny's pension payments, the \$288 was deducted dollar-for-dollar from Wood's \$1,815 ODSP cheque.

Now, the couple say they are struggling to make ends meet. They police their every purchase and occasionally rely on the food bank.

"You feel helpless. You're at the mercy of some guy at an ivory tower in Toronto," Wood said.

Both Savigny and Wood are diabetic, and say keeping to a strict diet to meet their health needs makes things more difficult financially.

Savigny said he would like to see the rules changed. If

he was working, he said, he would be able to keep his first \$200 earned per month and 50 per cent of his remaining income.

He said if that were applied to his CPP cheque — if CPP were to be treated as earnings — he would keep \$244, rather than having the entire sum deducted off his wife's ODSP.

Savigny said he has reached out to local provincial offices, and while always met with sympathy, said none have been able to offer any change.

"Their patented response is to quote the rules," Savigny said. "I know the rules, I want to change the rules."

The couple is not alone in looking for change in the

ODSP system.

Angela Browne, a St. Catharines-based paralegal and member of the ODSP Action Coalition, said there are several problems with the system she and her colleagues are lobbying to have changed.

One of Browne's main concerns, she said, is that couples and families on ODSP are treated as one unit, rather than as separate entities.

"Under ODSP, they're all one and it kind of drags everything back about 100 years. As a result, what it does is it puts the family in poverty, threatens the marriage and the stability of the family relationship," she said.

She added ODSP simply doesn't provide enough

money for families to live on.

"Our key goal is adequacy. We want people to live on enough income so they don't have to make decisions like whether to pay rent or put food on the table," Browne said.

Welland MPP Cindy Forster said she hears of many people struggling with the provincial disability program.

She said ODSP has failed to keep up with inflation.

She said the purpose of the claw-back is to encourage people to go back to work, but that many people who receive ODSP may not be able to get or keep a full-time job.

"It's unrealistic (to think) that people can survive

year after year on this small amount of money," Forster said.

Browne said issues surrounding poverty and disabilities need to be continuously brought forward.

"Just about everyone who is on ODSP has their story to tell, and the big issue is that there just isn't enough money," she said.

Minister of Community and Social Services Helena Jaczek was not available for an interview.

In an e-mail statement sent to the Tribune, Jaczek said, "Maintaining an effective social safety net for those in need is an important part of poverty reduction."

Continued on next page



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Port Colborne couple say disability payment rules are unfair

From previous page

"We know that we have more work to do in continuing to improve the social assistance system. That's why we have consistently increased social assistance for individuals on ODSP. Since 2003, our government has increased rates for individuals with disabilities relying on ODSP by 18.3 per cent.

"This November, we raised rates to provide an increase of \$144 per year to a single individual or family receiving ODSP — a family where both adults have a disability would see an additional \$288 a year."

Progressive Conservative MPP and critic for Community and Social Services Randy Pettapiece, also responded with an e-mail statement.

"We know that individuals receiving support through ODSP can face serious struggles, and that every bit helps families on fixed incomes."

Savigny said he and his wife are

"It's keenly felt at this time of year," Savigny said. "Christmas is coming in a few weeks now, and it hurts."

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An advertisement for the Winter Festival of Lights in Niagara Falls. The top half features the Ontario Power Generation logo and the festival's name. The middle section is a photograph of a family watching a vibrant laser light show on Victoria Avenue. The bottom half contains event details and logos for Niagara Falls Tourism, Ontario Parks, Fallsview Casino, and the Winter Festival of Lights.

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■ GOVERNMENT: Bittle, Badaway get used to life in the capital

New Niagara MPs get down to work

GRANT LAFLECHE
Postmedia Network

For the first time in a decade, Niagara is without representation at the federal cabinet table.

But the region's newest Liberal MPs, Chris Bittle of St. Catharines and Vance Badaway of Niagara Centre, say Niagara won't suffer as a result.

"What it means is that I can focus entirely on local priorities," Bittle said late last week. "When you sit as a minister, you have another set of priorities that can take you out of the constituency."

He and Badaway were among the final MPs to be sworn in before Parliament resumed. Although elected, MPs do not have access to government resources until they take the oaths of office.

"You don't get sworn in until you get your writ from Elections Canada, and that takes some time," said Bittle.

Not that it stopped them from getting down to business while waiting for their turn to be sworn in. Both men met with local politicians and business leaders

prior to travelling to Ottawa to get their offices set up, and were already fielding calls from constituents.

"I was getting phone calls and e-mails almost immediately (after the election)," said Badaway, the former Port Colborne mayor. "Constituents were asking for help with one issue or another, so I got to work right away. There were some things that I couldn't do immediately, but I wasn't going to wait."

Under the previous Conservative government, Niagara was home to one cabinet minister: Tory veteran Rob Nicholson of Niagara Falls held several cabinet posts, finishing his tour as a government MP as foreign affairs minister. He now sits as the justice critic for the opposition Conservatives.

Former St. Catharines Tory MP Rick Dykstra did not hold a ministerial post, but did serve as a secretary in a few ministries, including immigration.

Neither Badaway nor Bittle were assigned to secretary posts.

Badaway said that doesn't mean the new MPs won't have their hands full on the Hill.

■ CONCERT

Metric, Death Cab for Cutie headed to Meridian Centre

Metric and Death Cab for Cutie will perform at Meridian Centre in St. Catharines March 22.

Tickets can be purchased at livenation.com or by phone at 1-855-985-5000. Prices including taxes are \$20.50, \$39.50 and \$55 plus service charges.

The concert is part of the Lights on the Horizon tour that includes 11 Canadian

cities.

Death Cab for Cutie is touring in support of their eighth studio album, *Kintsugi*, which has been nominated for a 2016 Grammy Award in the best rock album category.

Metric's recent releases have earned multiple Juno Awards, including two for album of the year and one for artist of the year.



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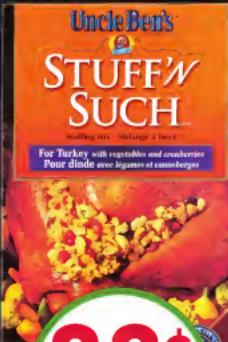
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■ ECONOMY

Data shows Niagara economy is powering up

DON FRASER
Postmedia Network

A new study suggests Hamilton-Niagara is growing some economic muscle.

The recently released Ontario Economic Update 2014 shows employment in the "Hamilton-Niagara Peninsula Economic Region" expanded at a faster pace in 2013 than in previous years.

The 2013 Census metropolitan census metro area led with a near five per cent rise in employment, while employment growth in the Brantford census area is at a 1.5 per cent pace this year and Hamilton has growth of around one per cent per year.

It also says service-producing industries, including tourism and health care, have been sources of employment growth regionally. Closures in the manufacturing sector have been subsiding.

The report was created by the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and the Credit Union Council of Ontario with the Greater Niagara Chamber of Commerce.

It said St. Catharines-Niagara overall unemployment is forecast to fall below seven per cent this year, the lowest since 2008. That regional CMA does not include Grimsby or West Lincoln.

Statistics Canada most recently had St. Catharines-Niagara's November unemployment rate at 7.8 per cent, seasonally adjusted — that's in the bottom half of large census metro areas in Ontario. However, this was during a period of seasonal high unemployment for the region.

October's was 7.3 per cent.

McGuire, Nielsen's forecast is 1.7 per cent during 2015 in the Hamilton-Niagara region, slightly lower than the 2.2 per cent expected in 2015, but higher than every other year since recession.

"Looking ahead, manufacturing, tourism and transportation services stand to benefit from more favourable external conditions," said the update summary released by the Niagara chamber. It said domestic sectors such as construction, real estate and retail trade will gain from low interest rates and an improvement in economic conditions.

A major manufacturing decline — which has hampered Niagara and southwestern Ontario — appears to have reversed.

"Most of the major restructuring in the manufacturing sector appears to be over," said Liam McGuire, director of policy at the Ontario chamber. "That's not unique to (Niagara). It's something we're seeing across southwestern Ontario and the GTA."

According to provincewide data, most areas will enjoy improving economic conditions in the coming year.

Growth will be driven in part by a rise in exports, a stronger U.S. economy and a low Canadian dollar. Government fiscal policy will also be a key driver, with federal and provincial infrastructure commitments to stimulate growth.

Across Ontario, regional growth per-

Economic update report

■ It spans census metropolitan areas of Hamilton, St. Catharines-Niagara and Brantford, and also covers Hamilton-Niagara.

■ Region grew more rapidly in 2013 than 2014. Unlike last year, most of this year's employment growth was outside the Hamilton census metro area. The St. Catharines-Niagara CMA led with a near five per cent rise, followed by a substantial employment gain outside the three CMA's in the region.

■ Full-time employment in the region is well above trend growth for the second year in a row. Most of the gains are centred in the Hamilton and St. Catharines-Niagara. Part-time employment down and full-time is up, and total hours worked is higher.

■ Unemployment at six per cent is the lowest in years. Hamilton's rate will approach an average of 5.6 per cent in 2015 and in St. Catharines-Niagara it will be below seven per cent, the lowest since 2008.

■ The employment share of service industries in the region is 77 per cent, compared to 63 per cent in 1987 and 70 per cent in 1996. The highest share is in St. Catharines-Niagara, due to its major tourist industry.

Source: Update synopsis from Ontario Chamber of Commerce

formances will be led by the Toronto and Hamilton-Niagara regions, with the Kitchener-Waterloo-Barrie and London regions close behind.

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In the greater Niagara-Hamilton-GTA, McGuire said there's been an "upick in not just service sector, but also manufacturing and it's on the back of a weakening Canadian dollar and growing American consumer demand."

Corrina Carson, interim executive director of the Niagara Workforce Planning Board, said her group supports the accuracy of the study's findings.

"It's encouraging in its forecasts of an improving outlook on the future growth of the Hamilton-Niagara CMA using (key) indicators," Carson said, adding the study focuses on projected forecasts for our larger economic region.

The board's own labour market report, released last month, shows St. Catharines-Niagara has seen growth across all industries by employment, with the exception of information, culture and recreation.

"While manufacturing experienced significant loss between 2009-2014, it has held steady between 2009-2014 (and) better than that of Ontario," Carson said.

Niagara chamber CEO Misha Balsom said one big factor behind the declining

unemployment rates noted in the update is a lower rate of participation in the labour force, especially since the recession.

"Had the labour force participation roughly remained the same as in 2009 and employment growth was unchanged, the region's unemployment

rate would be closer to nine per cent, rather than six," Balsom said.

As for manufacturing Balsom says despite the overall decline of that sector, "local manufacturing job numbers have been stable for years now."

"In fact, we've actually

increased employment in manufacturing over the last five years, even while Ontario as a whole lost manufacturing jobs," she said.

"There's every indication that manufacturers in Niagara have found a way to make it work and that this sector can be a source of future job growth."

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■ CURLING: National championship expected to put region in the TV spotlight

Scotties rolling into Niagara

BERNIE PUCHALSKI
Postmedia Network

A standing ovation at St. Catharines Golf and Country Club greeted the news that the Meridian Centre will host the 2017 Scotties Tournament of Hearts national women's curling championships.

"We've done a couple of announcements this year, and that has got to be the first standing ovation," said Curling Canada spokesman Al Cameron.

Curling Canada vice-chairman Peter Ingham said the warmer weather was what helped St. Catharines secure the event that will bring Canada's best female curlers to the city.

"There's a great volunteer community here, there's a great club that is going to be involved,

there's the Meridian Centre and the Ontario Curling Association," Ingham said.

"When you put that all together, St. Catharines was the place."

Curling Canada received upwards of eight bids to host the event, and St. Catharines was a shortlist of two or three before picking St. Catharines.

"We need the city support, but you also need the city sponsorship," Ingham said.

"It's a big part of it. We will bring the national and international sponsors that are part of our Season of Champions, but we need local sponsors right down to every local community getting involved, whether that's selling tickets or purchasing tickets or giving them away."

Plenty of work still needs to be done before the championship starts Feb. 18, 2017.

"Now that we officially have

it, we have to put together an organization to make it happen. So we're looking for between 400 and 500 volunteers just to pull it off," Geddie said.

Curling Canada will provide the bid committee with an organizational structure to implement. The committee's first sign will be to find people to chair the 12 sub-committees.

Many of the volunteers will be back from when the city hosted the 2001 and 2007 Canadian curling juniors.

"A lot of them learned a new skill," Geddie said. "We ran a Curling Canada officiating clinic here, and a lot of people learned how to time and how to judge curling performance."

Tickets for the event will go on sale starting Feb. 20 at the Scotties event in St. Paul, Minn. Prices haven't yet been announced, but for the 2016 event they ranged from \$15 to \$20 for weekday draws, \$369 for the entire week and \$159 for a championship weekend mini-

pack, which includes one ticket for each of the final six draws.

The attendance record for the tournament is 154,688, set in Regina in 1998. When King Ston hosted the event in 2013, it attracted 65,825 fans.

"We always have sellouts, and we're looking at a beautiful thing," Ingham said. "In a 5,000-seat arena, it would be great if we could sell out every draw."

No city has ever sold out every draw.

"The final weekend will, of course, be sold out and the issue will be how we can do during the week," Geddie said.

"The only problem I can see is that curling is made for television. What will we be up against is whether people want to stay home and watch it or do they want to come out."

"But that's part of our challenge to come up with a product for that week that people think is worthwhile coming over to the arena and the HearstStop Lounge."

The HearstStop Lounge, which will be located at the St. Catharines Golf and Country Club, will feature the opening ceremonies, autograph sessions, band performances and other social activities. TSN will telecast most of the event.

"It's a minimum of 66 hours on national television where St. Catharines is front and center in the sports consciousness in Canada," Cameron said.

According to the 2015

Scotties drew an average viewership of 566,000, and 1.05 million for the final.

"The coverage we will see over the number of days of the Scotties Tournament of Hearts will be something that is really going to put St. Catharines on the map," Mayor Walter Sendzik said. "It's what we are trying to do here."

The impetus for hosting a Scotties came after the St. Catharines Golf and Country Club hosted the two national junior championships.

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PORT COLBORNE - WAINFLEET CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Serving the Business Community Since 1902

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Let me start with a big thank you to our dedicated members and Board of Directors.

It is through members and their involvement that the Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce continues to connect visitors and local residents to businesses, and businesses to other businesses in the South Niagara region.

The staff of the Chamber, and the Board of Directors, is excited about the opportunity to serve and support the business community in the coming year. Our goal is to surpass the expectations of our membership through, among other initiatives, increased utilization of technology and social media.

We are looking forward to many new and exciting things for the Chamber as our membership increases and we continue to build and grow in year ahead. We are working hard at finalizing our 2016 schedule, and our goal is to bring strong programs and events that are of real value to our members throughout the year. We anticipate that our members can look forward to many opportunities to network, advertise and professionally connect at all of our upcoming events including the President Awards Gala, BA5's, Mayor's Luncheon, Business Tradeshow, Learning Forums and of course some joint partnering activities.

Congratulations and thank you to our businesses who work hard at providing the goods and services that keep visitors and residents coming back to our region time and time again. With the addition of new Board members in January, we look forward to new initiatives that will keep our business community strong and provide support and opportunities for all.

Stephanie Babin, President - Port Colborne- Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce



Stephanie Babin

Nominations are Now Open!

The Chamber is now accepting Nominations for the 2016 President's Awards. On March 31st, let's celebrate the outstanding businesses and citizens in our communities!

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Mark your Calendars for our Upcoming Chamber Events...

- Feb. 3rd 2016 : BA5 @ Ten Thousand Villages
- March 22nd 2015: Southern Tier Mayor's Luncheon @ the Italian Hall
- March 31st 2016: President's Awards Gala @ the Italian Hall

Keep an eye on our website for the full list of 2016 events!

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Happy Anniversary!



2015 marks the 100th anniversary of Vale - a Chamber member from the very beginning! Congratulations to this landmark business in Port Colborne and best wishes moving forward!

Chamber Events

Thank you to our members for participating in our events! The Chamber is proud to provide our membership with a variety of opportunities to network, learn, and grow as business owners. Here's a look at some of our programming from the past few months....

The park was packed with happy faces and full bellies at this year's annual Lobster & Laughs fundraiser



Evolution Window Films hosted the September BAS. Members enjoyed a delicious BBQ and networking on the beach!



The newest businesses to join our membership were welcomed at Whisky Run Golf Club in September, where introductions were made at the New Members Breakfast



In September, members took advantage of the biggest and best networking event in Niagara, setting up information booths at "Niagara Networks" held at the Fallsview Casino.



Members gathered at Raw Materials Company for some networking, refreshments and fun at the October BAS.



PORT COLBORNE - WAINFLEET CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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la_dolce_vita_bakery.pcb@gmail.com

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The Second Annual Tradshow was held at the Italian Canadian Cultural Centre in Port Colborne in early November



Our experienced panel discussed hiring techniques and how to retain valuable employees at the November Learning Forum



The Chamber events for 2015 were wrapped up with special holiday BAS hosted by InPort News.



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■ **BOOKS:** Mystery writer Sandra Orchard

Accident led to career as author

JOHN LAW
Postmedia Network

It wasn't a chance encounter or sudden job loss which launched Sandra Orchard's career as a writer.

It was excruciating pain.

While working on the century-old farmhouse in Pelham she shares with husband, Michael, she slipped a disc in her back. It had to be surgically removed, resulting in nerve damage and life-changing discomfort.

"I can't sit at a desk for more than a couple of hours and I can't stand in one spot for more than 20 minutes," she says. "But I can sit in a Gravity Chair with my laptop all day."

Though she majored in math at university, Orchard — real name: Sandra van den Bogerd ("Try Googling that," she says) — was writing reviews and articles for her home-schooling newsletter. Barely able to move after the mishap, she turned her attention to fiction. After her mother's death, she decided the best way to process her feelings was to instill them in her own characters.

It led to *Deep Cover*, her 2011 debut novel about an undercover cop, the woman he loved who is covering his criminal underlife he wants to take down.

It was followed by two more books in her Undercover Cops series, a series for Harlequin's Love Inspired Suspense line, and most recently, her acclaimed Port Aster Secrets series.

Set in Niagara, the three Port Aster books trace the mystery surrounding

the death of a research scientist's friend as they near a breakthrough for treating depression with herbal medicine. It involves the border and a miracle plant for a story that concluded in *Desperate Measures*, released in July.

"I was really to kill them all by the end. When I started researching plant-critical practices, there's lots of fodder there," she says.

The second book in the series, *Blind Trust*, earned her a Word Award from the Word Guild this year, while one of her Harlequin books — *Identity Withheld* — won a National Readers' Choice award.

She has a new mystery trilogy on deck, steering her away from Harlequin for the time being.

"The last few I pitched to Harlequin, they said, 'This is too much mystery,' because that's where my brain is still," she says. "They want more jeopardy. That's not what I want to do at this time. You, I've blown up cars, I've had carbon monoxide in houses, I've had everything you can think of. It starts to duplicate, because I've already written seven books for them."

Because mystery is her strong suit, Orchard is also realistic: Her trilogy won't be the next *Hunger Games* or *Twilight*, and she's fine with that.

"Most of the mystery writers that make a decent living, you don't really know their names" she says. "(But) they've done very well in Niagara. I've had some very supportive book stores, and my publisher was happy enough with the sales that they gave me a contract for another three books."

It was followed by two more books in her Undercover Cops series, a series for Harlequin's Love Inspired Suspense line, and most recently, her acclaimed Port Aster Secrets series.

Set in Niagara, the three Port Aster books trace the mystery surrounding

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■ BOOKS

Woman chronicles grandmother's war experiences

JULIE JOCSAK
Postmedia Network

It started as a personal mission to document her family history.

Two years later, Lesia Chytra has a self-published book for sale on Amazon, called *Tarnished*.

"I had been curious about my own family history. I live in Toronto now, but the Ukrainian community in St. Catharines is quite strong and I felt that a lot of the Ukrainians in St. Catharines have a very similar story," Chytra said.

"They all basically landed in St. Catharines after World War II, coming from displaced persons camps, either in Austria or Germany. I grew up hearing people talk around the terms, how they had been in the camps."

Chytra and her father decided to do what they could to document her paternal grandmother's memories before they slipped away with her increasing dementia. The three sat down for an interview each time Chytra came to the St. Catharines home.

"I was naturally interested in history and my own family history so in 2013 my father and I decided that we should sit down and get some of the family history written down formally. We sat my father's mother down and asked her about her life which she had always been really open about in a series of interviews," said Chytra.

Chytra turned those interviews into a story that spans three generations. Set during the Second World War, the story follows the main character, Tanya, based on her grandmother, through her experiences during the war.

"For major events before 1948 I tried to stick closely to that, but then after 1948, it's closer to my current family so I made it something completely different," said Chytra.

Chytra is an accounting teacher at Holy Name of Mary Catholic Secondary School in Brampton. She currently lives in Toronto but was raised in St. Catharines, attending Laura Secord Secondary School and then completing her undergrad in busi-

ness administration and getting a bachelor of education from Brock University before earning a master's of education from University of Toronto.

This book marks her first writing venture. Beginning with no writing experience, Chytra would sign herself up for writing workshops whenever her schedule allowed. It was there that she met a writing partner, Dave Moons, who helped guide her through the process.

"He's really the reason I published the book," said Chytra.

He was able to help her think out loud and show her how to put it on a page, showing her what works and how to make a story flow.

For Chytra, the research and community connections were among her favourite parts of the process.

"I loved the research aspect of it," said Chytra. "For example, something small like, what kind of toilet paper did they use in Germany during the war. You project your own experiences onto it. In one part of the book, she is carrying a stack of toilet paper so I had to figure out, 'What did toilet paper look like in Germany? Did it come on a roll like we are used to?' As it turned out, it came in a stack."

Chytra also found connecting what her grandmother's remember's as a naïve 15-year-old girl to actual events fascinating.

"She would say she had been born in her village, she knew she had been born at a factory for a few months, and then she knew that there was a lot of bombing that happened," Chytra said. "I was able to figure out that yes, the Allies had bombed Dusseldorf, it was quite devastated in September 1942. So I was able to take what she remembered and connect it to history which is really accessible now for us to read about."

Chytra speaks fondly of the two-year project.

"I really enjoyed the actual writing process. I found I got really lost in it. It was hard to get going but once I did, I was easily lost myself for two years."

"This is so much more then I would have ever hoped that it would turn in to."

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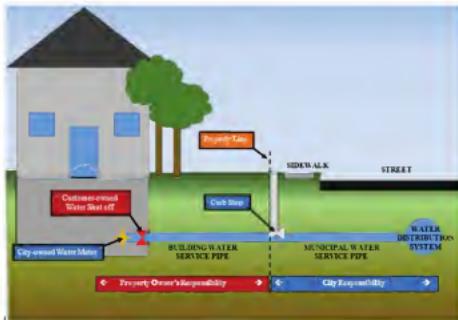
Frozen Water Services

HOTLINE 905-834-6627

Information for Property Owners



PORT COLBORNE
WWW.PORTCOLBORNE.CA



Under the Ontario Building Code, all the water service pipes in your building, and the Building Water Service Pipe, which extends into your building, are defined as "plumbing".

Legally, the City only has jurisdiction and responsibility for the "Water Distribution System", which is defined under Ontario Regulation 170/03 – Drinking Water Systems, as including the watermains, appurtenances (i.e. fire hydrants, valves, sampling stations) and "service connections" (which we refer to in the Frozen Water Service Pipes Policy as the Municipal Water Service Pipe). Only the pipe from the watermain, up to and including the curb stop, is part of the Port Colborne Water Distribution System.

The water meter is the only item in your property owned by the City; however, under the Water By-Law (3151/22/95) property owners are responsible for protecting the water meter from damage, including freezing.

How to Prevent Frozen Pipes

1. Protect Indoor Waterlines

Insulate indoor water lines in unheated areas, along exterior walls, in crawl spaces and garages. This will not necessarily prevent a frozen line, but will slow the process down and allow you to take measures to prevent a frozen water line.

2. Protect Vacant Property

If you are selling or maintaining vacant buildings, or leave your property vacant for an extended time period in the winter, leave heat on to prevent frozen water lines. If heat is turned off, winterize all water lines, the water meter and other fixtures. Ensure all lines are drained because they can still freeze. Consider calling the City and having water shut off at the curb stop (property line), for a modest fee.

3. Protect Outdoor Lines

Disconnect hoses from hose bibs, and turn off inside the building. Disconnect irrigation systems, and winterize sprinkler systems by blowing water out of the sprinkler system with air (after ensuring the sprinkler system is NOT connected to interior plumbing)

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU

For Operational Inquiries:

Utilities Supervisor 905-835-5079

For Billing Inquiries:

Water Billing Clerk 905-835-2900 x125

On the Web: http://portcolborne.ca/page/frozen_water_service

I have no water! What do I do?

Step one - Find the frozen pipe

- Try taps in different areas of the property - if one or more taps run, your issue is likely due to internal plumbing.
- Check your shut off (generally in basement or crawl space, before the water meter) to make sure it is completely open. Check the pipe coming into the building or the water meter to see if it appears white or frosty, or has a slight bulge or crack in it.
- If you have a crawl space, the frozen pipe may be in this area.
- If none of the taps work, the problem may be at the water meter, or where your water service enters your home through the foundation.

Step two - Thaw the pipe

- Move quickly - thaw frozen pipes as soon as possible.
- DO NOT USE A TORCH! Applying too much heat too fast can cause the ice to fracture and rupture the pipe, causing flooding.
- Open a tap and use a hair dryer, space heater or warm towels wrapped around the pipe to thaw it.
- Once flow has been restored, allow the tap to run until the frozen section is thawed and full flow is restored.



I've ruled out frozen plumbing - Now what do I do?

Option 1:

Call the City's **Frozen Service Hotline**
905-834-6627 and provide:

- Your name
- Your address
- Contact # where we can reach you

Option 2:

Visit the City's Frozen Water Service page at: http://portcolborne.ca/page/frozen_water_service and access the "Frozen Service Reporting" section to register your property on the Frozen Services List

Once registered via Option 1 or 2, access the Frozen Service Plumbers List either on the City's website, or at City Hall (at 66 Charlotte Street from 8:30am to 4:30pm). Contact a plumber from the list and schedule an appointment at your convenience.

The plumber will:

- Assess the situation and confirm the internal plumbing is not frozen
- Attempt to thaw the service line from inside the building

If the plumber is successful at thawing the line, they will tell you if they suspect it was frozen on the Building Water Service Pipe (the "private" side - see diagram) or on the Municipal Water Service Pipe (the "City" side - see diagram).

If the freeze was in your plumbing or on the "private" side of the pipe, you will be billed directly by the plumber for their service - and you will have your water restored!

If the plumber cannot thaw the line, and suspects the problem is on the City's side, the plumber will tell you to notify the City of their findings, but also state that the City has to verify their findings.

Once you call the Frozen Service Hotline back, your property will be placed in the queue for the City to dig up the Municipal Water Service Pipe to attempt to thaw the line from outside.

I've left my tap running, who pays for the water?

It depends...

Property owner pays full consumption charges if:

- Ran tap to prevent freezing
- Ran tap to prevent re-freezing after thawing frozen plumbing or frozen Building Water Service Pipe

City adjusts consumption charges to account for extra water usage if City:

- Notified owner to run tap to prevent Municipal Water Service Pipe from freezing
- Instructed owner to run tap after thawing to prevent re-freezing of Municipal Water Service Pipe



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You might not know what you think you know

GRANT LAFLECHE
Postmedia Network

There is no other way to put this. I was humbled by a bicycle. Not that this was any ordinary bicycle. As an experiment, Brock University professor Robert McGay had the steering reversed so the gears attached to the front of the bike means right is left, and left is right.

But I knew this when I got on it. The instructions were absurdly simple and, ultimately, utterly unhelpful. I couldn't ride it.

At all.

The reversed steering bike McGay put together is an object lesson about how what we think know, and what we think we can do with that knowledge we actually do.

"We do to ourselves all the time," said McGay, an associate professor of education at Brock. "I'm not talking about learning things, but rather little things about what we think we know and how we manage the world around us every day."

I suggested McGay name his evil contraption "Socrates."

In Greek literature, the street philosopher Socrates was famous — and hated — for his particular method of questioning people. To have a conversation with him was to be led down a garden path where, when you got to the end of it, you discovered you actually have no idea what you are talking about.

I certainly had that feeling of total ignorance when attempting to ride McGay's bike. I know how to ride a bicycle. Sure, I thought, adapting to the steered steering might be a bit of a challenge, but a manageable one.

Not so much, as it turned out.

The bike, which McGay assembled after watching online videos of similar experiments, is a useful tool to examine how adults learn, he says.

"Part of the point here is that correct information is not teaching, and understanding that information is not learning," McGay says.

More than 100 people have attempted to ride McGay's bike so far. No one has managed to peddle more than a few feet.

Even when the backwards steering is explicitly explained, people still couldn't ride Socrates.

"Some people got very frustrated. Some accused me of doing a trick," McGay says. "Others come to it with strategies about how they will ride it. But so far it hasn't helped anyone."

I cooked up my own strategies before I saddled up.

Other than it being way too small — making me feel like a circus bear riding a tricycle — there was nothing overly weird about the bike.

My basic plan was to drive in a straight line and when I had to correct the path of the bike, I would just turn the handles away from the way I wanted to go.

Simple right?

As far as plans go, it worked about as well as a submarine made of bread. I managed a full length of the paddles and travelled less than a metre.

Beyond the obvious difficulty of doing something counter to what your brain and muscles have been trained over time to do, the common sense rationale as to why adults have such difficulty riding the bike is that the older we get, the harder it is to learn something new.

McGay says the science tells us that is not exactly true. The brain is more

adaptable than previously believed. There is a YouTube video of man who wanted to ride a backwards bike in about eight months, McGay says, and the man's son learned in about three weeks.

But that doesn't necessarily prove kids brains are more adaptable.

The guy was giving his son some powerful motivators. He said the kid could come with him to Australia if he learned to ride it," he says.

In other words, if McGay offered you \$1,000 to learn to ride Socrates,

you might do somewhat better than someone doing it out of idle curiosity.

So maybe we all have a little reason why so many fail at what seems on paper to be a fairly simple task. It certainly shows that even the clearest explanations don't necessarily translate into great results when it comes to learning something new.

So maybe we can all be a little more patient when trying to show our grandparents how to use an iPad. After all, there is bound to be something you can't do either.



GRANT LAFLECHE/POSTMEDIA NETWORK
Brock University professor Robert McGay with his reverse bicycle.

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10 LB BAG

199
3 bag limit



DEL MONTE GOLD
PINEAPPLE
LARGE SIZE



299
Each

PRODUCT OF MOROCCO
CLEMENTINES
LARGE SIZE



499
4 lb Box



EVERYDAY MEALS MADE SIMPLE



BREADED CHICKEN BREASTS

Three varieties to choose from.

8 PIECES x 113 g/4 oz

All-white meat in crispy coating.

13.99
save \$3



LOWEST PRICE OF THE SEASON!

A chewy chocolate and coconut base with creamy custard and a thick chocolate topping.

NANAIMO BARS

5" x 12" TRAY 850 g

9.99
save \$4



Savoury cheeses and sweet fruit in phyllo pastries.

Fruit and Cheese Phyllo Collection

18 PIECES 396 g

New!

8.99
save \$1



Creamy Canadian brie with fruit is a delightful dessert.

Brie 288 g

- NEW Pear
- Cranberry

New!

7.99
save \$1



Light, fluffy pastry with an Irish cream filling.

Chocolate Irish Cream Puffs

12 PIECES 210 g

New!

5.49



ALL PRICES IN EFFECT FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18 UNTIL THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2015 UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.

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